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## LIFESTYLE COLUMNISTS

# At Your Library: 'In Death' series penned by Hall of Fame writer

*Yesterday 7:53 p.m.*

Nora Roberts has been churning out best-sellers for decades, having penned well over 200 romance novels and counting. She's become one of the most recognizable authors around and the first to be inducted into the Romance Writers of America Hall of Fame. Her books have spent more than 860 weeks on The New York Times Bestseller lists, and although she primarily writes for women, she has so many series to choose from that there is one for everyone.

Under the pen name of J.D. Robb, which she created using the initials of her older sons and a shortened version of her last name, she created a great suspense series (with a romantic edge) collectively called the "In Death" series. Unlike her previous romance novels, these focus on one character and her experiences working as a lieutenant in homicide for the New York City Police and Security Department. Your Abilene Public Library carries this series, and once you read one, you'll want to continue on through the rest. Before I get into that, let's learn a little about the series.

As the story goes, Roberts wanted to write romantic suspense novels early on in her career rather than stick with just contemporary romance. As she began to churn out book after book, it was suggested by her publisher that she create a pen name to be able to publish more of her works. By doing that, she would get the chance to delve into this new series.

In 1995 she released the first book in the new series titled "Naked In Death," which at the time was established as a futuristic science fiction police procedural since the book was set in the mid-21st century. Unlike her previous novels, this book offered more in the lead character of Eve Dallas. At age 30, Dallas had grown up in the foster care system in Texas and then moved to New York City, joining the police department and rising to lieutenant in no time. Pretty good career trajectory!

With Dallas as a dedicated cop, having the smarts and know-how to solve any crime, this series not only crosses over with appealing aspects for male readers, but it stays true to Roberts' roots. Although each of the books do center on a crime, it's the development of Eve's relationship with her love interest, Roarke, which dominates the overall theme throughout the series. Roarke's not too bad himself, as he happens to be one of the richest men in the world who's skilled in electronics, security, hacking, and has a pretty sizable collection of firearms, maces, swords, and other assorted weapons. Basically, he's a man that may appear to be mild-mannered and even-tempered, but if you set him off, he knows how to unleash his own personal sense of justice.

Since 1995, there have been 56 sequels added to the series with the most recent being this year's "Brotherhood in Death." With no signs of stopping anytime soon, Roberts did state that the series will never contain one of the lead character's children. Oops. Spoiler alert here — Eve and Roarke do eventually get married ... sorry for that one. However, Roberts has stated that the series will probably end with Eve getting pregnant. Considering this series has been ongoing for more than 20 years now, and the series has only progressed a few years, we still may have tons more left.

So take a shot, no pun intended, on checking out the "In Death" series by Nora Roberts writing under the name of J.D. Robb. Although she's released hit after hit under her own name with works primarily aimed

at women, this series is one that translates well to both sexes. Plus, since every novel features "In Death" as part of the title, they're not too difficult to find. But rest assured, once you get into them, you'll want to keep on going. Look for them, and other popular summer reading materials, at your Abilene Public Library. Remember, everything we offer is free, and all you need is a library card. You certainly can't beat that!

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